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NEUTRALITY AND PUBLIC OPINION

**BY
HON. CHARLES NAGEL**

An Address Delivered at
Sheldon Memorial Hall,
St. Louis, Mo., on the
Twenty-third of January,
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Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen:

First, I want to express my appreciation for this invitation from the Deutsche Gesellschaft. It means a great deal more to me, perhaps, than you suspect, because, for the best part of my life I have lived under something of a suspicion that my allegiance to our institutions of English origin might tempt me to forget my ancestry. I have never felt the justice of that charge, because I have believed that traditions bred in the bone are perfectly safe in the citizenship of the United States. As I read it, every nation whose representatives come to these shores makes its contributions, and all must be amalgamated in the one citizenship of this country.

Feeling as I do, I am not unaware of the delicacy of the subject that I am to discuss, because I know that there is danger of partisanship, of which we have had many demonstrations; and because I believe it to be of the utmost importance that the whole case be impartially and fairly stated. We must remember that we are a composite people. Our problem is to unite the representatives of the many races in obedience to our common institutions. I think it can be said that the citizen of German blood has done this. True, our institutions are of English origin in the political sense; but in the social and industrial sense tremendous influences have been brought to bear from other countries, and, in that respect, the German may claim to have done his share. In the political field his prominence has not been particularly distinguished. It is true at least to say that prominent positions have not been represented by him with any degree of frequency. But that is natural and normal. It was wise to have institutions of English origin kept within the charge of the representatives of those people who might be expected to have the better under-

standing of these institutions. But when we consider our country apart from the strictly political phase, and include the industrial and social, it must be said that the German branch of our citizenship has done its share. I know it is customary to point to the contributions of German science, and art, and music, and learning. But let us look for once in another direction.

When, for illustration, we ask who does the farming, it will not be denied that foremost among the real tillers of the soil are the German, the Bohemian, the Swede, the Norwegian, the Pole and the Italian. If we ask about the composition of our people, we will find that the English, the Scotch and the Irish stock do not represent substantially more than fifty per cent of the population of this country.

These are facts, and we ought to congratulate ourselves that they have not been made more prominent in the consideration of our questions than has been the case. Every contribution has been made to the common amalgamation, which, in my judgment, is so complete that there should be no room for the terms that we hear bandied about, which are perhaps not intended to mean as much as they seem, but which, in my opinion, are to be avoided.

Our sympathy we cannot deny. For many it must be difficult to restrain it within the confines of patriotism. But we, who glory in an independent citizenship, must be careful that no word and no conduct may tend to commit our country to a false position. We must keep in mind a distinction between sympathy for a particular belligerent, or even an opinion about the right and wrong of the war, and the position which we ask our Government to take as a neutral country. In my opinion there should be in our citizenship no German-Americans, no Irish-Americans, no Italian-Americans and no English-Americans. The use of the hyphen as I see it really defeats the very idea for which we stand. And I say this fully appreciating that there are English sympathizers who might well employ the hyphen to identify themselves as Americans. There is just one platform upon which all the principles and traditions of all the races here represented must be assembled, and from which must be announced every rule for

our guidance. That is the platform of the United States. But, standing upon it, every citizen has the right to ask questions of himself and of others; and he may even be under the obligation to express his convictions as they come to him, upon every problem of moment to this nation.

I know it has been said that the foreign war does not concern us. Eminent authority in our nation has made that statement. How monstrous a proposition! The foreign war concerns us, not only now in the most material sense; but the consequences of that war, no matter what the result may be, will be of vast significance to this nation for years to come. The mere cutting of communication between Germany and Austria and this country has brought anguish and sorrow to homes here and there; has deprived people here of the privilege of communication, and of the right to give support oftentimes to those dearest and nearest to them. So profoundly are we interested in this means of communication, that its destruction may well present the question of our right to protest, and how the situation is to be remedied. Civilized peoples are so closely related to-day that the consequences of such a war cannot be escaped by us, privately or officially.

Some of the questions forced upon us are of public moment, and concern the Government. As to them we have a right to ask how they are dealt with, and how they are answered; and whether they are considered with that degree of impartiality, judgment and firmness, which the united citizenship of this country has the right to expect.

For illustration: It is urged that the United States should not permit the sale of arms and ammunition to belligerents, and that contention has been presented from several points of view. It has been said that we are not neutral if we sell arms under the existing conditions, because one belligerent is in a position to prevent similar delivery of arms to other belligerents, and, therefore, enjoys an advantage. As one citizen, I am bound to say that I cannot follow that argument. I cannot believe that there is anything in treaties or in international law which prevents citizens

of the United States from selling ammunition to any nation that is in a position to obtain and to pay for them. In other words, the choice is not ours. We appear to be willing to sell to any nation; and the circumstances that one can prevent us from selling to another, does not present a question of international law or justice. In my judgment, a mistake is made when the argument is put upon that ground. As a matter of right, our manufacturers may sell to whom they please. The fact that they cannot deliver may be their misfortune; and it may be the misfortune of a belligerent people, but it does not present a question under international law. In other words, the question is not one of justice to Germany and Austria, but it is one of self-respect for the United States. The real question is, are we willing to have our manufacturers sell arms and ammunition to any one? In view of all our recommendations for peace treaties, are we prepared to have that traffic continue?

With respect to this Continent, and more especially with respect to Mexico, Congress a few years ago adopted a resolution which authorized the President of the United States to prevent the exportation of arms to nations on this Continent. That authority was used, and arms were not imported for a time. If we are really as solicitous about peace on the other side of the ocean as we appear to be, what is there to prevent us from extending that resolution? That, in my opinion, is the weight of the argument against the sale of arms. It is true that the use of the President's authority in pursuance of that resolution has somewhat obscured our position. We did afterwards allow the export of arms and ammunition to help a particular side in the Mexican controversy, and we did hinder a German ship from delivering arms and ammunition at a particular point to the other side. But that circumstance might be used to show the danger of playing favorites, and to accentuate the necessity for extreme circumspection in our attitude now. In any event this much is true: Our position as a promoter of peace will not be judged by high-sounding treaties, platforms and political speeches, but by the promptness with which we cast our moral declarations into legislative form.

Again, we have a shipping bill, which presents the question whether we have the right to buy merchantmen that are interned in our harbors. Personally, I am opposed to this bill, because I should regret to have a seeming emergency used as the inducement for the adoption of a political policy which, to my mind, constitutes a radical departure from accepted principle, and which invites the first step toward government ownership of large enterprises. But the further doubt has been suggested, and is now urged, that we might give offense to one of the belligerents if we bought such ships. I cannot follow that argument. If we have a right to sell ammunition to England, we must have a right to buy ships from Germany. I am told, and read in the press, that it has been officially said that no objection is made to the purchase by us of German ships, provided those ships are used in South American commerce. That argument I cannot follow. We either have a right to buy those ships, or we have not; and it must not be left to any foreign country to say how we shall employ those ships, or where we shall carry our commerce.

The uncertainty of the objection to such a purchase is well illustrated by the varying grounds that have been assigned. Originally it was said that Great Britain might take exception to the fact that a purchase of German ships by us would result in a material monetary support to her enemy. Now we are told that these interned ships might be converted into armed men-of-war. Probably these objections are readily disposed of. In the first instance, the validity of a purchase for cash from Germany must depend entirely upon the character of the subject purchased. So far as the ships—the subject of the purchase—are concerned, they are not armed at the present time, but are merchantmen pure and simple; and, further, they are merchantmen upon whom we have, in the absence of a merchant marine of our own, depended in a very large measure as our carriers, in the pursuit of our legitimate business with foreign countries.

The only argument, therefore, which, in my opinion, is deserving of serious attention, is the one that these ships in their

present position are subject to capture by the allies; and of this question the utmost that can be said is that it is undetermined. Accepting it as such, it is for us to decide whether it is our purpose to permit every doubtful question in whose answer we are interested, to be settled for us by another power, in accordance with the dictates of her immediate necessities. Or whether we will, for ourselves, inquire into the rule of reason of the particular case, and having reached our own conclusion, will stand for our decision. What is the reason of the case? To repeat, these merchantmen constitute in large part our reliance for carrying our trade between friendly ports. They are not now prepared for war. They are in no sense to be likened to men-of-war built in neutral ports, and there transferred to a belligerent to be employed upon the high seas. The change of ownership in our case would involve nothing more than the employment of these ships in the same business in which they were heretofore engaged under the flag of a neutral between neutral ports.

That this is the reason of the case was virtually confirmed in the London declaration of 1909. That declaration was signed by the delegate of Great Britain; and the only circumstance that now prevents us from insisting upon that declaration is that it has not been ratified by her.

In view of this situation, I submit that there is no more room for discussion about the correctness of the principle. The only point that can be made is that some countries have not formally acceded to the principle, although they have morally ratified it. That being so, it appears to me that we are unquestionably in a position to say that we propose to have some hand in the formulating of correct international principles—not after the time of their employment has passed—but while they can be invoked by us, and that we should stand upon a decision so reached.

The next question is as to cargoes that may be carried from our country to neutral ports—and here we are confronted by an extended list announced by Great Britain, which is not based upon and is not enforced in obedience to accepted practice under international law, but which has now been so extended and so

enforced, upon the avowed ground that the necessities of the case compel Great Britain to resort to such measures. You have heard it said during this war that necessity does not afford a good excuse; and, for my part, I fail to see why the argument should be good one way and not the other. We may in this case want to consult our own interest, as others have done; and, in my judgment, we have a right to insist upon a list of free goods substantially as it stood before the war was declared. While I am not a believer in our ability to permanently build up our trade upon the misfortunes of other countries, we have a right to take advantage of the legitimate conditions that have arisen, and we must at least have the privilege to sell to any nation with whom we are not at war any goods that were not commonly recognized as contraband by international rule. Belligerents may be permitted to modify international law in so far as these modifications affect only the immediate contestants. It is quite another thing to have either belligerent by declaration or conduct deprive a neutral of established rights.

More than that. Great Britain has extended the right of blockade. She secures the effect of an actual blockade of German ports, by withdrawing her fleet to the North Sea, perhaps even to the western coast of England, and by taking neutral ships into her ports upon mere suspicion, without any such well-defined grounds as have heretofore been recognized. Her trials in her Prize Courts, and her ultimate purchase of cargoes, afford no relief, because her course necessarily results in the discouragement and destruction of our commerce.

These are questions that present themselves to us as citizens, and we watch the answers that are made because we are interested in the development of international law and rules as they are now being formulated. We have an illustration: There is a ship which has been purchased by a citizen of the United States, and our Government has decided that this purchase is proper and regular. That ship has a cargo confessedly not within any interpretation of the contraband list. In other words, by every rule of international law, and by the decision which our

Government has deliberately made, as I understand it, this ship has a right to carry that cargo to a neutral port. We are told that this ship will be seized because the sale is questioned. What are we going to do about it? Two extreme measures are possible. Perhaps a man-of-war might go with that ship, with the announcement that whoever seized one would have to sink the other. Or we might wait to have something turn up, and content ourselves with insuring the cargo for the time being. One course is as sure to invite trouble as the other.

In my judgment there is a middle course. There might be a Secretary of State who would declare in unequivocal language that we had determined that this ship has a right to go, and that she will go. In such an event we would not need a man-of-war, because the rights to the cargo are conceded, and the question of the ship's bona fide sale has been decided by us. We are not interested in disputed questions to be brought into moot courts. The delay of diplomatic correspondence is well calculated to serve the same purpose as seizing the ship itself. Protracted discussions mean no foreign commerce for us during this war. If we yield, the result would be a solemn declaration of the right of our manufacturers to sell ammunition to the allies, and acquiesce in the refusal to have us deliver cotton to Germany and Austria for fear that we might give offense to their enemies. In the last analysis we might be asked to admit that it is equally unneutral to refuse to sell ammunition to Great Britain and to offer to sell cotton to Germany and Austria.

In any event, is it neutral for us, without protest or inquiry, to receive and to accept Great Britain's note in which she announces that she may not continue the observance of the rule with respect to free cargoes, because her enemies are guilty of barbarous conduct in making war? Are we prepared to institute comparisons in the methods of warfare, and to accept this charge as against one belligerent, and upon that to surrender our rights with respect to the other?

Another international question is presented; that is, with respect to the right of belligerents on neutral ships. It may be

said that we are not substantially concerned, because we have no ships to speak of to be challenged. But we are profoundly interested in the situation, because it presents a grave principle of international law for the adoption of which we paid a heavy price at the time.

During the War of Independence Great Britain captured Laurens on board a neutral Dutch ship and held him as a prisoner in the Tower until the end of the war. In 1861 we took two Confederate emissaries off the English neutral ship Trent, and we were driven to the verge of war with England by doing precisely what England had done to us. Only by the presence of mind of Senator Sumner—by his taking the responsibility on the floor of the Senate—was our country saved from gravest consequences. Our submission established a rule, in spite of which citizens of belligerent countries have now been taken off Italian ships and Dutch ships. If it be contended that our right to protest depends upon present injury suffered by us, then it looks very much as though the law may be changed from time to time, so long as there is no neutral country strong enough to assert its rights. Again, I submit that there has been much said of late about strong countries protecting weaker ones.

It is for us to remember Abraham Lincoln and Secretary Seward, and their experience in 1861. We have a right to ask whether these rules of conduct upon the sea may be changed from day to day to suit the convenience and the purpose of one absolute power.

Monopoly is a dangerous thing. It may be beneficent, but it may also be abused. I hear that one of our distinguished citizens has said that the development of our commerce to South America would be very much furthered by the triumph of the British fleet upon the seas. I trust that the growth of our commerce may never be entrusted to the sufferance of any foreign power. Unless there be a world peace, I hope that we may stand for our rights and our obligations in our own name, not beholden to any nation. If there be need for a fleet, let it be a fleet with the Stars and Stripes at the mast. So long as there is monopoly of

sea power there is temptation to substitute men-of-war for merchantmen; there is danger of abuse and friction; and so long as there is friction there is danger of war; and that we should be prepared to meet.

I refer to these questions because they are real, and because, as citizens, we are entitled to our opinions. It may be said that this last question to which I have just referred is affected by the declaration of London of 1909, in which the broad term is employed that all citizens embodied in the army of a belligerent country may be taken off a neutral ship. The language is not that men, subject to call or service may be taken, but that men embodied in the army, may. It is to be remembered that the declaration of London has not been ratified by Great Britain, and has, therefore, not been accepted as binding by her; but even so, the declaration has received interpretation in two cases arising between Italy and Turkey. In one case Italy did take Turkey's soldiers and officers off an English ship without protest. In the other case Italy took passengers on the ground that they were enlisted men from a French ship. The last controversy was submitted to The Hague tribunal, and it was decided that Italy was right, because some of the passengers taken were really enlisted men. In other words, the decision rested upon the presence of passengers who were enlisted men. But apart from that, it must be remembered that many citizens of Germany and Austria taken off neutral ships were not only embodied in either army, but were not even subject to call or service, because they were far beyond the years when army service could be contemplated.

I submit that there has been no modification of international law in this respect, and if there is a principle at stake to which we, as one of the nations, have contributed at our cost, then that principle should not be changed without protest from us. If we act otherwise, the law will, in every instance, be made without us while we are waiting. We will be told that these questions should be submitted to tribunals for definite settlement. Ordinarily, I favor that course, but not when the delay is had under circumstances that must work obvious and irreparable injury to

us. Submission and awards of that kind are consolations for the weak. Present insistence upon right and justice in reason is a part of the strong. It should be remembered that international law is now in the making, and that not unlike all other law, it is the growth of conduct. If we stand helplessly by, the leveling process will be downward.

There are other questions, in my judgment, more difficult still and perhaps more far-reaching in their consequences, with reference to which there is great danger, that we may take partisan views and be guilty of hasty expression. For my part, I say again that I should regard it as a calamity if the difficulties and controversies on the other side should find reflection, by friction, on this side. But the way to avoid it is to speak promptly, deliberately and fearlessly.

True, our institutions are of English origin. It is not stretching a point to say that in the last analysis they are of German origin. It should be remembered that the English are not an unmixed stock, that the great mass of her people is Saxon, and that it was essentially this branch that constituted the early settlers upon our shores and gave direction to our institutions. We are not so far apart, between the United States, and England and Germany and Austria. Even other countries might easily be included, but the pressure is upon this particular point now.

When England had her war with the Boers, I expressed the opinion that the Boers could never win, because the English language would defeat them. They would not be understood in time to make a successful war. Even in great wars public opinion is a powerful factor.

To-day the English language is still the most powerful monopoly in the civilized world. A beneficent monopoly, no doubt; but in case of emergency, capable of great abuse. That monopoly has existed for a long period. It has been used to frame and to make opinion in England and in other countries; and the difficulty at this time is to correct impressions that have been created in the past, and that have been most carefully encouraged in the present.

This has been demonstrated particularly in the beginning of

this foreign war, when our country was flooded with one-sided, with colored and with false reports. In my judgment, the cutting of the German cable was the greatest political blunder of the war, not for temporary purposes, but in its ultimate consequences. It is true that in the beginning, public opinion was successfully prejudiced, because all the information came from one side. But the American people are fair-minded; they want the truth. They will be impatient if it is denied, and to-day we see that the demand is growing. In every newspaper we read, and in every conversation we hear, the effect of this new demand. Just as international law is made in the act, so history will be recorded as the facts are now written down. It is our part to help write them down correctly. We should remember that to this day the story of the Hessians is the chief reproach against the German element of this country; forgetting all the time that it was Great Britain who bought these wretched, helpless men; forgetting that the purchase was made against the energetic protest of Frederick the Great, and forgetting that Germany has always been a friendly power.

Let us return to some of these early reports about the war and see how they read in the light of facts that have been brought to us since. Take the case of Austria and Servia. One impression created was that Austria-Hungary had made an unreasonable demand upon Servia. Her Crown Prince had been assassinated. She had made exhaustive inquiry and presented evidence to show that among some twenty-five persons implicated there were a number in high official position, by whom the crime had been instigated and encouraged. It was claimed in the early reports that Austria-Hungary, in asking to participate in the hearing which Servia was willing to afford, had gone so far as to deny the integrity and independence of Servia herself, and that interpretation has found support here. What is the fact? Austria did not demand to sit in judgment upon the wrong-doers; she did ask that a representative of her's participate in the investigation—not in the judgment. Her request in that respect was assigned as the cause of the war, and upon that narrow margin

has it been attempted to fix the responsibility of this war by a great many among us.

Let us see how it compares with other instances. It was claimed by Austria that such a demand as she made was not unusual in similar international controversies. But we need not go back far. Only the other day the newspapers stated that Italy's demand upon Turkey had been met by an agreement to return an English Consul and to name a commission to make inquiry into the guilt of the participants; and that thereupon Italy, accepting these terms, had at once landed her own Consul, with instruction to participate in the investigation, and to see to it that that inquiry was brought to a prompt conclusion. The cases were precisely similar, with this exception, that Austria asked for the right to participate, and Italy took it. And yet there has not been an adverse comment upon the conduct of Italy, in public or in private, that has come to my attention.

But let us come nearer home. We have had controversies now and then. We went down to the Gulf of Mexico and made an attack upon a Mexican city. We killed a number of people, and lost some of our men. What was our grievance? Because somebody whom we would not recognize would not speak to us. That was the substance of it. We never declared war, but we made war. Are we in a position to pass upon the formalities of intercourse between nations? I speak of it because if we, as a people, propose to condemn the abuses of war, we should reflect upon what we ourselves have done through our Government.

What did we do about Spain? One morning the country was aroused by the information that the Maine had been blown up. When did we ask for or make an investigation? Some years after the war. We came to the conclusion that some Spanish officer, without any reason to believe that the Spanish Government knew of it, must have been instrumental in the blowing up of the Maine. And President McKinley himself could not stop the popular demand for war upon Spain. We made that war. We took territory in consequence, and we investigated afterwards.

By way of comparison, we should remember that Austria-Hungary, in making her demands, even to the last offered to guarantee to Serbia, and to the great powers, that the integrity of the Government and territory of Serbia should in all respects be maintained.

Furthermore, as late as 1909 the great powers had solemnly demanded of Serbia that her conduct toward Austria must be mended; that she had given constant occasion for unrest, and that the patience of Austria had been tried to the extreme. Is it to be wondered at that in view of the past experience and the immediate tragedy, and the unsatisfactory response from Serbia, Austria found it impossible to further control popular impatience, and felt compelled to resort to aggressive measures? And if she did, are we in a position to pass judgment on her conduct?

In this connection, is there not reason to believe that Russia exercised practical control over Serbia throughout; that some of her people were, as Austria charged, instrumental in furthering the friction on the border line? Is it not of peculiar interest now to recall that Grey said throughout the efforts to preserve peace that he was not interested in the Austria-Serbia controversy; but if Russia entered he would become interested? And is there no reason now, in the inquiry which has been made in the English labor organ of late, why it was that Grey, apparently solicitous for peace, exerted his influence at every point except the one where it might have been effective, namely, with Russia?

Take the case of Belgium. I know that there is strong feeling upon that subject. But let us get the true situation, and at least make up our minds upon all the facts that we can get; or, if we feel that we have not been supplied with everything, let us wait for the rest before we pass final judgment. It is true, as Germany said, she had no right to go through Belgium. As I recall it, she did not say it was a breach of neutrality, but that it was against international law. She also said that she was driven by necessity, and, finally, that she had every reason to believe that France would go through Belgium if she did not; and that therefore she could not take the risk of an attack under such disadvantageous

conditions. I know there have been a number of explanations made, and many of them do not meet with our sympathy. I know that Belgian, French, English and German authorities have said that in case of necessity every country at war has a right to cross neutral territory; and it has even been claimed that a Belgian authority has declared that this is especially true when the neutral power is not strong enough to protect itself. We need not approve of this doctrine, but reflection will tell us that necessity is a powerful factor, which has by no means been invoked by only one side in this war, and which has strong support in private and in public emergency.

Again, it has been said that Belgium had a treaty with Germany. Upon technical grounds that is to be doubted. Strictly speaking, the German Empire probably never had a treaty with Belgium. For this view Professor Burgess is authority. A similar view was expressed by Gladstone in 1870, and, I think, is shared by Grey at the present time. But that argument is hardly persuasive for the American mind. If, however, Germany was right in saying that Belgium was not really neutral; if she had serious reason to believe that Belgium was not neutral, then, in my judgment she could not hesitate to act: because her own salvation depended upon her decision and conduct. And in this connection it should not be forgotten that Germany promised protection to Belgium's integrity and reimbursement for all damage that might be done by the crossing of her troops, which was refused, and that even after the first conflicts Germany again renewed the tender and it was again refused. In the light of Germany's conduct with respect to Luxemburg, where she also crossed without strict right, but where her offer was accepted, Germany is at least entitled to have it said that an adjustment of the injury done has been reached, and that the larger part of the sum awarded has even now been paid.

But more has come to the surface now, although little enough publicity has been given to it. We are still told about the poor inhabitants of Belgium, and God knows every human being sees that picture. But sometimes there seems to be a disposition to

dwell upon our sympathies for the people, in order that the later disclosures about Belgium's official conduct may be covered over. There is no question now that Belgium and Great Britain had had communications. Not a treaty, but an understanding, to the effect that Great Britain would land troops in Belgium for her protection. Such understandings are more dangerous than treaties, because they are even more secret. Originally that understanding appears to have been based upon the supposition that Germany might encroach upon Belgium; but in the last interview reduced to writing, the representative of Great Britain makes it perfectly plain that his country intended to land troops without request on the part of Belgium, and would do it when England thought that such a course was necessary. When the Belgian representative insisted that English troops could be landed only upon Belgium's request, the answer was that Belgium was not strong enough to defend herself, and that Great Britain herself would decide when such landing should be made.

The documents are no longer denied, although for a long period of time after their discovery silence was observed with respect to them. The explanation has been offered that the entire communications were based upon the idea that Germany might become guilty of a breach of neutrality with respect to Belgium. But no explanation has been given, or, indeed, upon the face of the record can be given, for England's declaration that she herself would determine, without consultation of Belgium, when it would be necessary to land her troops upon the shores of Belgium.

Again, it is important to remember that an ex-Ambassador of Belgium, when these communications between Great Britain and his country were brought to his attention, in an extended communication which is also on hand, made the declaration that the understanding between the two countries had effected the surrender of Belgium neutrality.

Does it not stand to reason that Germany had grounds for suspicion, and are we to assume that she was entirely ignorant of these occurrences? Of course, no one here can prove it, but I assume German papers are as reliable as English papers, and

they do say that Germany had remonstrated with Belgium for having so many French officers in her forts; and When France answered that there was no French artillery in Belgium at the beginning of the war, Germany's response was that she captured such artillery at Liege.

These are circumstances to be considered, and if the case is as it now appears, Germany was undoubtedly right in her suspicion and in her decision. In any event, there is a great deal in what Trevelyan said at the time of his resignation from the British Cabinet at the beginning of the war: "I disapprove as much as any one the breach of Belgium's neutrality by Germany, but I insist that if France had been guilty of this wrong, we would have protested in some fashion without committing our country to war."

Above all, what becomes of the English claim that Great Britain was induced to join this war because of the injustice that Germany had done to Belgium, when Grey, on the third of August, in his speech to Parliament, said that on the day before, namely, on the second of August, and before Germany had touched Belgium, he had promised France that if France and Germany became engaged in war the English fleet would protect the north coast of France with British ships. Was that neutrality? There is no claim that this promise was not made before Germany was guilty of any conduct with respect to Belgium.

In the same speech Grey admits that as early as 1906 the officers of the English and the officers of the French army had been communicating for the purpose of preparing themselves against a common enemy. Even now in an English magazine we may read praise of Churchill for having had the foresight to have the English fleet reviewed as early as July (while the German Kaiser was sailing in his yacht in the North Sea), in order that the fleet might be ready for prompt action when the war commenced. And that statement finds support in the correspondence to the New York Nation. No wonder Trevelyan said when he resigned that they had been assured that England was free to act, but that they found now that she had been committed all the time.

Are not these circumstances to be weighed in determining the question of guilt or innocence of this world war?

It is not for me to say that this or that is true; but I do say that it is stated in responsible journals. Inasmuch as we are judging men and nations by books and articles, it is fair to present this side. It is also fair to add that the attache of Belgium in St. Petersburg officially reported in so many words, that it was obvious that the Kaiser had done everything within his power to prevent the war, and that there was little question that the war party in Russia could not be kept in control after the confidence had gained ground in St. Petersburg that Great Britain would stand behind Russia in any event.

These, too, are only circumstances, but why should they not be weighed?

To my mind there is strong proof that the Belgian Government was responsible, and that the Belgian people are innocent. All the sympathy that goes out to them, they deserve. No one on this side can do too much; but, let me ask, why not other peoples? Do you suppose that the Cossacks inflicted no suffering upon women and children in East Prussia? Or do we fail to think about their suffering because the English language fails to record it? Why not the Poles; are they guilty? They do not belong to any country. And does any one need to be told about their sufferings, with two armies marching across their country as often as three times—and does any one raise a voice or a hand for them? If we are to weep, why not shed our tears impartially?

Why not remember Finland? A civilized country with her own religion and her own literature, deprived of her constitutional independence by the stroke of the Czar's pen, and now further subjected to wrong and deprivation? Why not sympathize with that people? If you doubt the gravity of their case, read the volume by Fisher, who is an Englishman.

There are other minor matters that receive their coloring from the reports that come to us by way of England. I repeat, it is a mistake to cut off communication with Germany and Austria-Hungary, because had we felt from the beginning that we

heard both sides, impatience would never have entered our judgment, and it would be unnecessary for us to present the other side in such meetings as this, upon the ground that only one side had been fairly heard.

We read about the mines in the North Sea, and they are invariably called "German mines." Has anybody ever identified one? I read in a German paper the other day that the Dutch Government picked up one hundred mines, and that it was semi-officially announced that eighty of them were English and twenty French. I do not know whether this is true or not, and neither do you, but it should enter into the discussion, and should at least raise our doubts before we accept so plain a charge. Especially is this true when the statement is coupled with the early German official announcement that the Government has laid no mines in the North Sea except on the immediate coast of England and Germany, and that these mines are so secure that in the absence of unforeseen conditions they cannot be torn away.

Does it not stand to reason that Germany may not be interested in increasing the hazards in the North Sea? With the exception of Italy, her only means of communication with the world is by way of the North Sea—with the neutral powers, Holland, Sweden, Norway and Denmark. If interests are to be balanced, Great Britain has perhaps as much or more reason to make the North Sea insecure for the double purpose of discouraging commercial intercourse with Germany, and of giving Great Britain an excuse to maintain a practical blockade of German ports, with her fleet secure on the western coast of England.

Then there was the tale that the Kaiser had one hundred socialists shot. We now know that the socialists who fell were at the front. One socialist voted against one war appropriation, and more has been made of that than of the resignation of three of Great Britain's most distinguished citizens from her Cabinet, because they could not approve of the war.

We hear about atrocities. I shall not go into that subject. We know that there are atrocities in all wars, and that there are bad people in all countries. But, upon reflection, the American

mind will hardly accept that the German soldier—at least a product of a schooling system and of a system of labor and work—is more brutal than an army that is composed of English, French, Belgians, Russians, Japanese, Hindus and Turcos. It does not appeal to the imagination and judgment; and rather than listen to all these accusations, I would take the words of Lord Roberts—an Englishman such as Great Britain has ever had, a man, every inch of him—who, in writing the book “Forty Years in India,” observed the moderation and the modesty that Grant showed in his memoirs, and who deprecated these accusations because, as he said, “there are atrocities in all wars.” Finally, as investigations are made by Americans, and even by Englishmen, these accusations fall to the ground.

And so about the attacks upon the coast. It is the purpose now to have us believe that those attacks are barbarous and savage. It is true a man reading an account like that is bound to put down the paper. One child or one woman killed or injured in that manner is enough of tragedy for a whole war. Have you read about the little peasant girl in Galicia who received the highest order from the Austrian Emperor because her leg was shot off while carrying water to the fighting soldiers? But let us remember that the first attack on an undefended coast was made by the British ship *Pegasus*, while the coast of England is at least defended; and the first aerial raid was made upon unfortified Duesseldorf in Germany.

That was the introduction in the early part of the war, which has been followed up since then at other points; and the only difference between the two is that the one has been effective and the other was not.

That brings to my mind the point to which your chairman referred, and which should not be forgotten. Great Britain will naturally make much of these attacks because she has not smelt foreign powder in her country for several centuries. I do not say that rejoicingly, but these are facts. Great Britain has fought many wars, and has had many peoples help her fight, but she has had no fighting on English soil. Granting that her

men have fought like brave men—and they have been and are a brave people, in spite of everything that may be said now—they have not known for centuries what it is to have English women and children subjected to the ravages of war.

Germany, on the other hand, knows what war means. She has never had a time to forget, and she is not apt to declare war hastily.

When abroad last summer I asked whether I could get a piece of old German furniture. I knew I could get French and Italian, but I wanted a representative piece of old German. I was told it could not be had, because the thirty years' war had left none. That is the whole story. No one knows how that country has been devastated by wars fought upon its soil, often by foreign contending forces. Only the other day I read that no historian has ever dared to put in print the real story of the thirty years' war. Was it very different in the Napoleonic wars? Humiliation—heroism, but no recognition in the treaty of Vienna. Had Germany been given Elsas and Lothringen by treaty then that question would have been justly and finally settled. She was denied even so much. She was left to take these provinces in 1870, and thus was sowed the seed for another war. Germany knows the story that England has forgotten; and the people of Great Britain are naturally more sensitive, in view of their experience during the last few centuries about the real sufferings of war.

However, all this does not go to the real cause. We cannot determine who was responsible by considering merely such facts. We cannot determine guilt or innocence by the mere studying of the diplomatic chess-board, or by reading the White Book and the Blue Book, and less still by reading the briefs of astute lawyers based upon paper cases carefully prepared by experienced diplomats. The real cause of the war is not to be found in the trouble between Austria-Hungary and Servia, nor is it to be read in Grey's speeches, nor in the German Chancellor's, nor in the attitude of France, nor in the state of preparedness of Germany, nor in the timely review of the English

fleet, nor even in the building of Russian railroads with French money to the Eastern border of Germany. The real cause of the war, in my opinion, lies deep down beyond all these things. Wars are not made by Kings today; they are made by peoples; and, in my judgment, this war, in the last analysis, is a people's war. It is to be attributed to the inevitable conflict between the East and the West. That is the essential cause of the war. There are irrepressible conflicts of race, religion and material struggle that operate powerfully, though half-consciously, to bring about war in spite of all our peace proclamations. The spirit of the crusades is at present today as it was centuries ago, and some of the peoples involved are as little advanced and as little prepared for appeals to more spiritual tribunals than were the peoples of earlier days.

Germany is today the essential standard-bearer of western civilization against eastern encroachment, because England has for the time abandoned the cause. That is the fundamental explanation. The war being inevitable, the question really was how other countries would align themselves. About France there could be no doubt. She had decorated the statue of Elsas all these years, and the people who did that could not resist the war fever when the chance came. She had her war party and the day had come. Every one accepts that, and every one—even her enemies—feel profoundest sympathy for her. But that does not say that Elsas has not been as well governed by Germany as Ireland has been by England. The serious question was whether England would ally herself with her natural friend, Germany, to postpone war, or with her traditional enemy, Russia, to bring war about. As Grey said, she consulted her own interest. She had a civilized competitor against whom she had no cause for war, but for whose humiliation she was willing to become a party to any combination. In my judgment, she committed the greatest blunder in her history because her unquestioned triumph would be her profoundest defeat.

If Great Britain succeeds with Russia and Japan in defeating Germany for the time being, is there doubt in your minds

that Russia will take Constantinople, will in that way control the way to India, and will lay the first foundation for the dismemberment of the British Empire? Who would settle the questions which must surely arise in such a contingency between England and her Eastern ally?

Who are Great Britain's allies? First and foremost, Russia. Is that a combination to invite our confidence and our sympathy? What has become of the sentiment that was created in years past by the writings of Kennan about the horrors of Siberia? What has become of the impressions that were created by the fate of Finland? What is there to change the attitude of the United States, whose people sympathized with Japan against Russia and are now asked to side with Russia against Germany? Where is the popular demand that forced an abrogation of all treaties between the United States and Russia because of the oppressive measures which Russia exercised against citizens of the United States visiting their old homes? Do those who prate about brutality really wish the triumph of a government whose reputation speaks naught but oppression?

And what of Japan? What is the foundation and where is the justification of that alliance? Will anybody believe that Japan entered into the war without definite assurance of concessions? Then what has become of this abhorrence of conquest? Does any one know when, under what circumstances, and with what obligations the treaty between Great Britain and Japan was made? Was it an offensive and defensive treaty against the world? If we were excepted, was as much true of other countries? If so, who were they? And if Germany alone was had in mind in that treaty do we not get a hint as to responsibility for this war?

I ask is not such a condition suggestive for us—for the future in the Far East?

Who are the other allies? The Hindus? No. They are not allies. They have not the independence to form an alliance. They are citizens for the purpose of being soldiers, and for no other. I do not desire to criticize the Hindu; but I am endeavoring to

see just how it would look to us. It is somewhat anomalous, it appears to me, to know that a Hindu is practically excluded from Canada, and, if he gets in, is generally sent back, although he comes under the flag of Great Britain. And yet the Canadian and the Hindu are fighting side by side in the name of civilization against Germany. Not unlike Australia, suspicious of the encouragement to Japan in the Pacific Ocean, but glorifying in the combination of their fleets to humiliate Germany.

Is there anything inspiring in the presence of the Turco? No American will say that he ought to be a soldier in such a war. He belongs to a subject race. There is no thought of his fighting for his own independence or cause. The highest motive that can be attributed to him is his joy in killing some kind of a white man. In our country it is the irony of fate that we cannot secure even a chance at equality for the black man, although we have granted it to him constitutionally and legally; and, at the same time, the very part of our people which is least willing to secure the black man that right, is loudest in its expression of sympathy for the Turco's victory over the Germans.

And at last the Egyptian, too. Within twenty-five years England was still withdrawing from her temporary occupancy. Now she has in Egypt's name declared war on Germany to control the Suez Canal; and still we talk of breaches of neutrality, and condemn a restrained nation's desire to enlarge her territory.

Reflect upon such a combination to destroy a highly civilized people, upon the ground that they are brutal—for that is the charge. An attack to humiliate Teutonic civilization; and in that attack Great Britain has allies galore, but not a Teuton nation allied with her.

We are told that the accusations that have gone out are not really entertained in our country. It is said the American people are intelligent enough not to be influenced by that sort of statement. I am glad to say that, in a large measure, this is true. Some very distinguished men in our country have spoken up bravely and impartially. We read with deep interest the statements of the president of Yale, who, with absolute impartiality

and admirable clearness, lays before us conditions abroad as he knows them. But can we suppress other statements coming from a very prominent citizen, also associated with intellectual life, who has so far forgotten himself as to ascribe this war chiefly to the brutality of the German mind? That leads one to suspect that the author of such statements must have received his first impressions about Bernhardt and Treitschke from newspaper clippings after the war was declared. If he had read the books himself, or, better, if he had read other books about Germany, he would know that he has completely missed the point of these authors. Their appeal to the German people was to wake up; that was their real plea. They feared that the old spirit of the "Deutsche Michel" had again come upon the country, or that the people might suffer the common fate of prosperity; and they sought to arouse the people from what they thought to be lethargy and luxury.

But if we must speak of brutality, let us recall what authors of other countries have said. Have there been no Englishmen who talked war and advocated preparation? Lord Roberts counseled an English army based upon service, and he was a respected soldier and citizen. Churchill had for some time avowedly aimed at Germany in his public utterances. Lea, an American, as late as 1912, in a book dedicated to Lord Roberts, announced it to be the first duty of Great Britain to crush Germany; and Kitchener's reputation rests upon his ability to ruthlessly mow down savages. Is there nothing savage, for illustration, in Kipling, the poet? Has any man succeeded in putting brutality in so poetic a form, with the eternal refrain of the white man's burden, and never a thought for the yellow man? Is there nothing brutal in Curzon's speech, in which he anticipates the joy of seeing the Turcos dance on the sidewalks of Potsdam? And has France had no war spirit? Her present Minister of War has for many years favored an attack upon Germany. Russia has had her war party, menacing the peace of the world. Our country had Admiral Mahan, who believed in taking territory for the purpose of spreading civilization and meeting our responsibility to the world. Nor should we

forget that there was a time when we had Roosevelt, and regarded him as something of an interpreter of public sentiment.

So let us deal with these facts, and let us not be lost in phrases of militarism.

If Germany was strong in her own army, let it be remembered that she had not as large a percentage of soldiers to her population as France; and her appropriations per capita were smaller. Her appropriations for army and navy were not as large as those of Great Britain, and per capita they were much smaller. They were not as large as those of Russia. And above all, her army is composed of her own citizens—the same citizens who have made her a nation of first rank by every test of high civilization.

When we speak of the dangers of such a power in Germany, why not reflect upon the power of the British fleet? Is there no significance in a fleet which arbitrarily controls the seas, and, so far as we can see, makes international law to meet the case? As for the Kaiser, he is not an absolute monarch, as is so often stated. These impressions about militarism, monarchy and bureaucracy in Germany have been permitted to grow and live, because English information has not kept pace with German development. But now since we have watched the Kaiser for some five months, I think we must admit that there is at least one imperial figure who, with every son at the front, challenges the world's attention. They are a part of a system of which the people themselves form a part; more completely than is the case in any one of the other countries. Germany is a country of service from Kaiser to Knecht—in peace and in war.

I had not been in Germany for forty-two years, arriving there two days before the state of war was declared, but I witnessed the greatest demonstration that was ever presented to me. I could not have believed that it was possible for any people to exhibit such unanimity of spirit and devotion. On the day before the war, apparently every human being hoped that war might be averted; but in one hour the change was wrought, an army was created, an army of men at the front, and an army of women at home. Without sign of rejoicing or dismay upon every lip the

word Schicksalsstunde. I stood at the railroad station in Muenchen for hours and saw the strangers apparently of all countries rush to get away. With all the anxiety and terror among them, I never heard a word of unfriendliness; never saw an act calculated to invite friction or discomfort. As late as September, in Berlin, day after day I saw English women standing in long lines in the street waiting for their transportation, and not a person to molest them, not an officer required to protect them. I saw officers with their wives and families go to join their regiments, and part from them at the entrance of the stations. I remember seeing an old peasant woman accompanying her young son, carrying the last bundle as a token to her boy—but never a tear while the men were there. All for the nation. I traveled through the country, and out in the fields I saw the women and the children and the old men, who at sight of a uniform would pause to put down their rakes and cheer, and then go on to bring in the harvest. I have seen the children at the station cheering the soldiers; many times, no doubt saluting the men who filled the gaps made by their own fallen fathers or brothers. I attended a religious service in the Thier Garten in Berlin and heard the national hymns sung by the multitude—a mixture of religion and patriotism, such as I had not believed possible in this day and century. And it seemed to me that I saw one nation which the civilized world cannot afford to lose; because, and I say it without hesitation, more than any other, that nation has solved the modern problem of doing substantially all its own work in peace and in war.

We must remember that the questions of today are not so much political; they are rather industrial and social, and in these fields Germany has forged ahead with a degree of success that is little understood in other countries, and that, in my judgment, is without parallel. Great Britain has learned the lesson to import her labor. France has employed much foreign labor. We are doing it, and our unwillingness to do our own work constitutes our greatest weakness. Disraeli, early in his career, said that British aristocracy had retained its prerogatives, but had forgotten its obligations. Dawson, an Englishman, puts it plainly to Eng-

land, that if she wants to compete with Germany she must work like Germany. In a later book he says that bureaucracy does not necessarily mean the same thing in two countries, and that the greatest mistake England has made with respect to Germany is to misunderstand her local system, the foundation of her national strength. He says England has kept the form of free government, but has dismissed the use of experts. Germany has retained the expert, and has evolved the most successful system of liberal self-government upon the old rules laid down by Stein, that is known to the civilized world of the present day. The result is that Germany has no paupers; she has only poor; she has no feeling of contempt for poor people, but she has solicitude; she has no beggars on the streets, because there is work or support; she has no unprotected orphans, because the government takes control and sees to their bringing up. If persuasive evidence were needed of the perfection of her system in the care of her destitute it need only be said that in spite of all the horrors and cost of war, she has even now made an appropriation of \$100,000,000 for the reconstruction of East Prussia, destroyed by Russian invasion within the last few months. She has not rested with the appropriation, but she has appointed a commission of trained men to ascertain the best method for the restoration of the destroyed country, upon lines and in a fashion that will constitute an improvement over the conditions that prevailed before the war. These are evidences of her success in a field in which, despite all our declamation about liberty, most civilized countries of the present day have failed.

I need not say that it is not for us to make comparisons in passion. For one, I do not share the feeling that is sometimes expressed with respect to England. I think England has made a great political mistake. That is my judgment, and in that I am borne out by the statement made by Trevelyan at the time of his resignation. He said among other things that war had been declared because they did not wish to see France destroyed, but that he was just as much interested in the name of civilization not to see Germany destroyed. He asked whether they are to rejoice to

see Russia come out of this war successfully with her wild and ever-renewing hordes of endless peoples to pour down upon bowed western civilization? He adds that they are really fighting for Russia.

As many of you no doubt know, I have always been an admirer of England. The books of great Englishmen are on my shelves, and I cannot forget that such inspiration as has come to me I must attribute in large part to English influence. I cannot question that most of our citizenship, whatever its origin, must be in some measure indebted for the same experience. True, there are German books upon my shelves, and I may regret that they are not more widely understood in my country. I cannot but believe that our people would be benefited by a better appreciation of the sublime idealism of Schiller, the profound philosophy of Goethe, the intense patriotism of Arndt and Jahn, and the great statesmanship of Stein. But with all that, no American can be asked to forget that England always had her great men as she has now. I must still turn to Burke, Pitt, Fox and others, who were friends to our country in the day of her need, and who today provide inspiration for high patriotism. We cannot be asked to forget that in the day of our Civil War but for Bright, the great Englishman, we might have had England against us. I cannot forget that in this day there are Morley, Trevelyan, Burns and others who see England's case much as I see it, and who regard her attitude as a blunder. I cannot forget that Bryce wrote a book which was an awakening for the United States, and thereby rendered a service of inestimable value to us.

The truth is that the peoples of Germany and England are so closely related that this conflict should never have been. All the strength they have should have gone to each other's support, to sustain them in the ultimate conflict. Germany has understood the literature and the laws of England, and has profited by them. Although the English people have no corresponding acquaintance with German literature, her distinguished men have repeatedly paid tribute to German thought and influence. We need but instance Carlyle and Morley. Within less than two

years Lord Haldane, in his address before the American Bar Association, frankly stated that the German word "Sittlichkeit"—the foundation of all law and social order—had no translation in the language of any other people. Then how did this conflict arise but through the influence of misguided politicians.

In truth, these people are cousins, and unhappily the conflict must be the more serious because they are. Nevertheless, I cling to the hope and belief that in the last analysis the question must be how untimely Eastern influence shall be withstood in its attempt to encroach upon Western civilization. I ask, will any one nation be strong enough to make that resistance? For my part, I agree with the declaration which I read in one of the German newspapers even after the war, that in spite of all the savagery, in spite of all the bitterness and the hatred, it must be recognized that ultimately the Teuton nations will be compelled to stand together against Eastern invasion. Russia's day may come in the dim future, but it has not now come, because she is not now prepared to take control of the world's civilization by aught but arms and force.

Again, the Germans have the word which is the keynote to the ultimate Teutonic supremacy—Ich dien. It comes from them and they have lived it. The English adopted it, but, in some measure, are forgetting to live it. These are the words upon which those nations—Germany and England—will have to build their platform to stem the onslaught which is bound to come from the East—from a country that must be resisted, although its people can never be conquered because their country cannot be invaded.

And we? Our part may be that of ultimate peacemaker. If that be so, the first condition is an attitude of public and private neutrality. But neutrality does not mean mere acquiescence. It means absolute impartiality between belligerents, and firm insistence upon our own rights.

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